

# Montgomery County Commission on Aging Annual Report 2008



**Montgomery County Government  
Department of Health and Human Services**

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Dr. John J. Kenney  
presents a  
Certificate of  
Appreciation  
to retiring  
Commission  
member  
Juanita Perry.



Uma S. Ahluwalia,  
Director of the  
Department of Health  
and Human Services.  
Ms. Ahluwalia  
co-chairs the County  
Executive's Senior  
Sub-cabinet on  
Vital Living with  
B. Parker Hamilton,  
Director of the  
Department of  
Public Libraries.

Most photographs are provided courtesy of Les Trachtman, former member of the Commission on Aging, current Chair, Senior Arts Education Committee of the Vital Living Committee. Senior Summit photographs provided by Michael Bruen, Montgomery County Office of Public Information.

## Letter from the Chair of the Commission on Aging

March 30, 2009

To: The Honorable Isiah Leggett, County Executive  
The Honorable Phil Andrews, Council President


The Montgomery County Commission on Aging is pleased to present its Annual Report for 2008. This report summarizes the principal activities undertaken by the Commission in 2008 in carrying out its responsibilities to provide advice and counsel to the County Executive and the County Council on matters pertaining to the elderly. We pursue this function by advocating at the local, state and federal levels on behalf of programs that advance the health and independence of the most vulnerable and needy of our seniors as well as programs and facilities designed for use by the active and vital living segment of our senior community. The Commission strives to be a responsible voice for our aging population and to maintain a relationship of trust with all the agencies of government, private interest groups, and individual seniors.

The most significant event affecting Montgomery County seniors in 2008 was the convocation of a Senior Summit by the County Executive in November. More than 250 participants representing a cross section of county departments and agencies, non-profit, for-profit, and charitable organizations grappled with a broad spectrum of issues of concern to the senior population. The Summit produced a set of specific action plans that are being acted upon by a sub-cabinet group representing the various county departments. The County Executive has charged this group with coordinating and implementing the plans. The Commission stands ready to work with and support the County Executive and his sub-cabinet in their commitment to deal with these critical issues.

Early in 2008, Meg Campbell-Kotler, the Commission's Executive Secretary, retired. Her service over the years to the Commission was invaluable and truly outstanding. Elizabeth Boehner, Director, Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), in addition to her already substantial responsibilities, took over administration of the Commission until a replacement became available. The Commission wishes to express its appreciation to Ms. Boehner, not only for her interim assistance, but also for her support and guidance as Director, AAA. The Commission wishes to thank Susan Keane, Office Services Coordinator, for her important and valuable service to the Commission.

We are also grateful to Dr. John (Jay) Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Services, DHHS, for the exceptional support, guidance and wise counsel he provides to the Commission. Finally, we want thank our new Executive Secretary and Acting Director AAA, Dr. Odile Saddi, an experienced practitioner in the workings of Commissions, for her excellent service to the Commission.

Sincerely,



Irwin Goldbloom, Chair

## Montgomery County Commission on Aging

### COMMISSION OFFICERS

#### OFFICERS 2008

Irwin Goldbloom – Chair  
Patricia Lesnick – First Vice Chair  
James Mayo – Second Vice Chair  
Judith Jaffe – Secretary  
Alan Kreger – Treasurer

#### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Senior Services Oversight – Irwin Goldbloom  
Communications and Community Outreach – Juanita Perry  
Access to Health Care – Marcia Pruzan  
Public Policy – Michael Goldman

#### DEPARTMENT LIAISONS

Keith Fleeman – Department of Libraries  
Gail Gunod-Green – Housing Opportunities Commission  
Judy Hanger – Department of Public Works and Transportation  
Patricia Streeter – Department of Recreation

### COMMISSION MEMBERS

Danielle Benjamin	John Kenney, Executive Liaison
Elaine Kotell Binder	Alan Kreger
Morton A. Davis	Zoe Lefkowitz
Marvin Freedenberg	Patricia Lesnick
Barbara Glaser	Norman Locksley
Irwin Goldbloom	James Mayo
Michael Goldman	Diane Vy Nguyen-Vu
Frances Goldstein	Juanita Perry
Jordan Harburger	Paula Post
John Honig	Marcia Pruzan
Vivien Hsueh	Harriette Rindner
Judith Jaffe	Beth Shapiro
Blanche Keller	Judith Welles

## Enabling Legislation

The Commission on Aging, established in 1967, operated under the auspices of the County Council until August 1974, when its operation was transferred to the Executive Branch. Chapter 27, Article III of the Montgomery County Code created the Commission on Aging under the declared public policy of the County to:

- Improve conditions of the aging or elderly in the County;
- Work toward the elimination of restrictions that impede older citizens from full participation in the mainstream of community life; and
- Assist and stimulate all levels of government and the community to be more responsive to the needs of the County's older residents.



Irwin Goldbloom, Chair  
addressing the Commission

In addition, the Commission on Aging serves as the Advisory Council to the Area Agency on Aging as described in the federal Older Americans Act. Members of the Commission are appointed by the County Executive, subject to confirmation by the County Council. Under a section specifying powers and duties of the Commission, there are several provisions outlining a broad spectrum of powers. The following two subsections provide a good example of the breadth of the Commission's power:

The Commission shall have the power . . .

- (a) To research, assemble, analyze and disseminate pertinent data and educational materials relating to activities and programs which will assist in meeting the needs and solving the problems of the aging; to cooperate with public and private agencies, organizations and individuals in identifying and solving the problems of the aging; and to develop and conduct, as appropriate, in cooperation with county government, other services and programs dealing with the problems and needs of the aging.
- (g) To advise and counsel the residents of the county, the county council, the county executive and the various departments of county, state and federal governments on matters involving the needs of the aging, and to recommend such procedures, programs or legislation as it may deem necessary and proper to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for all persons, regardless of their age.



## Area Agency on Aging

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA), headed by Elizabeth Boehner until her recent retirement, is responsible for assuring the provision of a continuum of home and community-based services. The AAA is actively involved with community partners, collaborating with the Grass Roots Organization for the Well-being of Seniors (GROWS), administering county and state grant awards to contractors, training, public education/outreach, networking, and referrals.

In 2008, the AAA extended the hours of operation of the Aging and Disability Resource Unit to include after hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 5:00-7:00 p.m. The AAA organized an Aging in Place Conference in November 2008 that attracted more than 300 participants. The AAA secured the services of an occupational therapist to conduct education of assistive devices for eligible Aging and Disability Services clients. ■

## Commission Membership

The Commission on Aging consists of no fewer than 18 members appointed by the County Executive, subject to confirmation by the County Council. Members must be county residents of whom a majority shall be age 60 and older. Members include: those who participate in or who are eligible to participate in programs under the Older Americans Act; local elected officials or their designees; individuals who are or who have been active in government, business, industry, labor, community service, religious, social services, education, the professions; and representatives of major organizations or agencies concerned with aging. ■

## Liaison Activities

Commission members act as liaison representatives to other agencies and organizations. In 2008, those representatives were:

- Consumer Advisory Committee to the In-Home Aide Services Program - Barbara Glaser
- Transportation Committee for Seniors and People with Disabilities - Danielle Benjamin
- Public Guardianship Review Board - Frances Goldstein
- Recreation Department Advisory Board - Vivien Hsueh
- Committee for Montgomery - James Mayo



### **IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR SENIORS**

**COMMISSION ON AGING**  
401 Hungerford Drive, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Rockville, Maryland 20852  
240-777-1120 (Voice)  
240-777-1236 (TTY)  
240-777-1436 (FAX)

**AGING AND DISABILITY  
RESOURCE UNIT**  
240-777-3000 (Voice)  
240-777-4575 (TTY)  
**Emergency After Hours:**  
240-777-4000 (Voice)

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
Easy access to information about  
all Montgomery County  
Health and Human Services  
240-777-1245 (Voice)  
240-777-1295 (TTY)

[hhsmail@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:hhsmail@montgomerycountymd.gov)

## Commission on Aging Activities

The Commission on Aging had an active and productive year in carrying out its responsibilities to advise and counsel the County Executive, County Council and departments of the county, state and federal governments on issues relating to Montgomery County's seniors. The Commission also advises the Area Agency on Aging, as required under the federal Older Americans Act.

During the year, the Commission pursued its traditional function of participating in development of the budget for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). DHHS administers the core safety-net programs that sustain the vulnerable and needy seniors in our community. To that end, the Commission, in consultation with key DHHS officials, developed proposals for presentation to the County Executive. The Commission then appeared before the County Executive to advocate for the adoption of important initiatives. After the budget was proposed, the Commission testified before the County Council on various program initiatives and, in small groups, advocated face-to-face with individual council members and their staffs.

Early in the year, the Commission opposed an effort by the County Executive to suspend the Call-N-Ride voucher program for a 3-month period. This would have curtailed the use of those vouchers for many senior participants who depend on that program for transportation for medical services. The Council responded by unanimously agreeing to not curtail the program, advising the Commission of its belief "that this program was too vital for the

low-income seniors and the disabled to be de-funded, despite our current fiscal situation."

The Public Policy Committee of the County Council asked the Commission to provide comment, suggestions, or ideas about pending legislation regarding employment contracts for domestic employees. After research and exploration of the issues, the Commission supported the legislation, which provided an exclusion from the contract requirement for nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified nursing assistants. In addition, the Commission urged the Public Policy Committee to expand the exclusion to include domestic workers who provide companionship and personal care services for the elderly. The County Council

enacted the legislation and included the expanded exclusion as recommended by the Commission.

Another issue that drew the attention of the Commission concerned DHHS interest in a competitive process for awarding a new contract for congregate meals, an essential component of the senior nutrition program.

The opportunity for competition would possibly lower costs and provide more meals with improved quality and presentation. The Commission voiced its support for promptly issuing contract solicitation documents. At the conclusion of the competitive process, a new vendor was awarded a contract by the county, at lower cost and with improved features substantially benefiting the senior nutrition program.



Chuck Short, Special Assistant to County Executive Leggett, Irwin Goldbloom, Chair, and David Richman, former Chair, at the Commission on Aging Annual Meeting

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### COMMISSION ON AGING ACTIVITIES

In May, the Commission held its Annual Meeting. Charles "Chuck" Short, Special Assistant to the County Executive, presented a compelling overview of the burgeoning population of seniors in the county, the anticipated impact of this population's growth on county services and programs over the short and long term, and challenges and opportunities for serving the vulnerable and needy as well as our vital, active older residents.

The Commission conducted two Stakeholders' meetings during the year. These are public forums in which interested parties meet with members of the Commission to express their views about issues affecting seniors. The event typically draws interested individuals and representatives from a wide range of organizations who share their views with the Commission.



**Delegate Benjamin F. Kramer  
at Legislative Breakfast**

**Montgomery  
County Executive  
Isiah Leggett  
addresses  
participants at the  
November 2008  
Senior Summit.**



Perhaps the Commission's single most important activity in 2008 was participation in the planning and conduct of the Senior Summit that took place in November 2008. In May 2008, Mr. Leggett convened a meeting of high-level officials from all county government departments to consider issues relating to county seniors. As a result of the retreat, the County Executive directed the convening of the Senior Summit.



**Summit participants in a work group**

An effort was made to include all relevant interest groups at the Summit. More than 250 people attended, including county employees from all departments, and private citizens representing non-profit, for profit, and charitable organizations. Prior to the Summit, work groups had met to consider and make work plans on specific issues relating to seniors.



**Senator Richard S. Madaleno  
at Legislative Breakfast**

The Commission also hosted a breakfast meeting for members of the State Senate and House of Delegates who represent Montgomery County. Several legislators attended and participated in a spirited discussion of legislative issues and goals, particularly those affecting seniors.

(Continued on page 12)





## FY09 Budget Priorities

Enabling its residents to age in place with dignity and respect is a county goal. The Commission believes that it takes the many components of the community working together—seniors, caregivers, local government, non-profit and private sectors—to create an environment that allows for successful aging-in-place in

Montgomery County. Through its annual budget priorities, the Commission seeks to assure sufficient funding for county services that support our seniors' ability to age in place.

### DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

#### **Nutrition Services - \$307,100**

The Commission recommended a \$307,100 increase in the Senior Food Program budget to maintain the same level of service as in FY08 and to increase the number of home-delivered meals and meals for ethnic communities. The Commission wanted to ensure that seniors receive at least one hot meal each day and maintain social connectedness. The ethnic/cultural senior lunch programs are especially in need of funds to serve additional seniors. This activity is supportive of the aging in place concept.

#### **Adult Day Centers Subsidy - \$105,000**

The Commission recommended an increase of \$105,000 for the Adult Day Care Program, which provides family caregivers with financial support and respite from the care of their elderly family members. Implemented late in FY08, the program was successful. Information outreach about the program already is increasing demand for the services provided. This program helps to keep elders in the community and prevents caregiver burnout, a major cause of nursing home placement. The program is available to disabled adults as well as seniors.

#### **Senior Mental Health - \$550,000**

In FY06, of the 7,179 individuals treated in the Montgomery County Public Mental Health System, only 91 were seniors (1.25%). The Commission recommended

a budget increase for Senior Mental health to support a Geriatric Behavioral Health Treatment Team for services for our low-income senior residents. These seniors find it especially difficult to pay for and obtain treatment for mental health or substance abuse problems.

#### **Assisted Living Subsidy Program - \$284,330**

The Commission recommended an additional \$284,330 for assisted living subsidies for low-income seniors who live in group homes for the frail elderly and adult foster care homes for frail seniors and adults with disabilities. This would fund 31 seniors currently on the subsidy waiting list and would include support for a half-time Program Specialist II. While the subsidy is low, it helps maintain low-income family independence and in some instances keeps the senior from going on Medicaid and into a nursing home instead of remaining in the community.

### DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION

#### **Senior and Community Centers - \$153,212**

Funds were requested to provide one full-time career position at the Schweinhaut Senior Center, one full-time career position to manage the senior community center programs and the mini-trip program, and six part-time positions to increase the number of days each week that senior programs are available at Coffield, Fairland, and Leland Community Centers. ■

## FY08 Committee Activities

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is comprised of Commission Officers and standing committee chairs and vice-chairs. It develops the major priorities and provides direction to the Commission. The four standing committees identify service gaps and quality-of-care issues, conduct studies to address policy concerns and service barriers confronting seniors, and work to improve strategies for effective outreach about county services to seniors and their caregivers. The primary areas on which the Commission has been focusing with regard to county policy and budget are:

1. Identifying services and resources needed for successful aging-in-place;
2. Promoting stronger communication and program integration among the organizations responsible for programs designed to serve seniors, e.g., accessible public transportation for seniors;
3. Promoting information and services related to health and wellness of seniors; and
4. Where resources are lacking, obtaining needed funding and policy support to reduce waiting lists for seniors eligible for services.

### ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

In 2008, the Committee continued looking at the needs of older patients at the time of discharge from hospitals. Committee members had begun examining this topic the previous year, based on information from recent federal studies showing a need for improvement. The Committee met with heads of discharge planning departments of five area hospitals. Although many of the concerns those departments expressed are beyond the scope of the Commission, two specific needs emerged that

may require further investigation: transporting patients to and from hospitals and medical appointments, and placement of patients with mental health needs into appropriate facilities. The Committee plans to pursue these issues further in the coming year.

The Committee also reviewed the proposed Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP). CHIP would establish an ongoing, sustainable method for better understanding and addressing health disparities and related health issues at the sub-county level. After receiving in-depth information about CHIP from a Commission on Health liaison, the County's senior epidemiologist, and the county's health officer, the Committee recommended full Commission support of CHIP. The Commission agreed and sent a letter of support to the County Executive. Based on the response from the County Executive, the Commission anticipates an initial level of activity on CHIP in 2009.

The Committee also studied two other topics related to health and safety of older county residents. Although both are affected by budget constraints, it may be possible to identify low-and no-cost outreach mechanisms for informing area residents about them, including—but not limited to—the county's "Seniors Today" cable television program and its new Montgomery Senior Site.

- The File of Life program, run by the County Fire and Rescue Service. The centerpiece of the program is a form filled out by residents with up-to-date health and medical information and attached by magnet to the refrigerator. County rescue personnel are trained to look for the form in emergency situations and report finding them highly useful.

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## ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

- “Plan 9,” an initiative of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Program, concerns the ability of seniors to shelter in place during a natural or man-made emergency such as fire, flood, or an enemy attack. “Plan 9” provides simple steps residents can take to ensure that their homes are adequately equipped for such emergencies.



In the coming year, the Committee will continue to work on strategies for improving communication about these and other health and wellness topics of concern to county seniors.



## COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The Communications and Community Outreach

Committee plans and produces the Commission's County Cable television show “Seniors Today: Resources for Vital Living.” There are eight shows produced annually. Each show appears daily for a month and can also be seen on the County Web site. A ninth show features the winners of the “Path of Achievement Awards” given to those seniors who had made outstanding contributions in various fields in Montgomery County.

Guests have included County Executive Isiah Leggett, members of the County Council, Directors of the Departments of Health and Human Services, Recreation, and the Fire and Rescue Services. The program features events of interest to the senior community, and coverage on topics on health, housing, continuing education, cultural events, aging in place, services for seniors and consumer

protection. Various events, such as job fairs, art fairs, and information expos are featured, as well as shows on adult day centers, library services for seniors, nutrition, and many other subjects of interest to our senior population.

In addition to “Seniors Today,” the Committee works to get information out to the community by helping with press releases, the Senior Stakeholders meetings, and other activities to further communication. The Committee plans to identify additional outreach strategies in 2009 as well as opportunities for coordination with the county as it responds to communication issues noted at the Senior Summit.

## PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

In 2008, the Public Policy Committee focused primarily on the many ongoing programs that offer assistance to needy seniors. Rationing of resources is accomplished by a mix of need and income qualifications and by utilization of waiting lists. The Committee gave particular attention to the waiting lists for the various programs. In most cases, a triage system is used, assuring that the most critical cases get moved to the front of the line. Program managers agreed that while added resources could be well spent, the waiting lists for the various programs generally are within tolerable limits.

## SENIOR SERVICES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Oversight Committee focused on a number of issues within its purview. Early in the year, members of the Committee met the Director of the Montgomery County Recreation Department, along with staff members responsible for senior programs. Committee members discussed planning and implementation of programs for seniors and planning for future community centers, where seniors' programs would be located.

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## FY08 Summer Study Work Groups

The topics for Summer Study are selected each year at the Commission's Annual May meeting. Members of senior stakeholder organizations are invited to participate in the Commission's Summer Study committees. In the summer of 2008, the Commission focused on Transportation, Public-Private Partnerships, and Senior Programming at Senior Centers. The following is a summary of the Summer Study Group reports.

### TRANSPORTATION

The Commission on Aging believes it is critical for seniors in Montgomery County to have transportation options in order to maintain a mobile lifestyle and age in place. In an effort to help achieve this, a Summer Study group undertook an extensive analysis of current and potential programs and services available to county residents.

Approximately 68 public and private programs currently provide transportation to seniors. Other services are provided by either private car services for which there is a substantial fee, or faith-based groups that operate on a voluntary basis for members of their community. The actual number of seniors who are served is unclear because of variation in how programs compile their records.

County transportation services include Call-N-Ride (Taxi Vouchers), Connect-a-Ride, Senior Programs Transportation, Escorted Transportation, and Senior Connection. Some of these programs are funded by the Department of Transportation, while others fall under the budgets of the DHHS. Only one program, Connect-A-Ride (CAR), operates a helpline. This is a Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA) program that is largely supported by the county.

In addition to research on existing county services, the Summer Study Work Group also contacted ITNAmerica, a program operated from Portland, Maine, that provides technical assistance to communities that wish to become affiliates. ITN provides rides with door-to-door, arm-through-arm service to thousands of seniors nationwide. It is an innovative solution

with unique programs that allow older people to trade their own cars to pay for rides and enable volunteer drivers to store transportation credits for their own future transportation needs.

The Summer Study on Transportation group has identified two overriding concerns: it appears that few seniors know what transportation services are available, and that existing services are fragmented and lack coordination. The Summer Study concluded that additional data are needed about current costs of services and the extent of unmet needs.

With more accurate information about both of these factors, the county would be able to determine the feasibility and cost effectiveness of creating an effective senior transportation program that includes both coordination and provision of services. The question is which of two alternatives—expanding the capacity of the existing programs, including the information and referral component, or creating a new program similar to the ITNAmerica model—would result in an effective program. The group recommended that a study be undertaken to evaluate these two alternatives.

### PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The Summer Study Work Group on public-private partnerships explored various concepts designed to promote the interests of seniors through partnerships between the public and private sectors. Discussions focused primarily on opportunities to take advantage of private funding sources for programs benefiting seniors.

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## **PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

The Public-Private Partnership Group heard a presentation by Sally Rudney, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Community Foundation. The Foundation is a private organization with a mission to facilitate philanthropic giving by county residents and businesses. It brings together many small individual and corporate charities in an efficient way to reduce the administrative burdens on any one charity. It provides professional and administrative staffing and advisory services. Most importantly, it provides a bridge between those who want to make charitable contributions and local non-profit organizations seeking grants. It thus provides an important vehicle to channel charitable funds to local non-profits, many of which focus their attention on low-income families. The Foundation's 140 family and corporate funds distributed \$6.8 million in grants during the previous year.

Ms. Rudney, who has appeared on Seniors Today, described various activities of the Foundation. She invited Commission members to participate in the Foundation's ongoing activities.

The Summer Study Group also discussed opportunities such as job fairs and governmental economic development activities. Montgomery County currently supports a job fair for seniors through a grant that has been administered by the Jewish Council for the Aging. The fair has been a success for the last two years, drawing many prospective employers and applicants. The Summer Study group strongly advocates for its continuation into the future.

Representatives from the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development presented an outline of the Department's programs and services. Its mission includes

creating quality jobs within the county and increasing the county's economic base through the attraction, retention, and expansion of businesses. The group indicated its interest in promoting higher-quality job opportunities for seniors than those usually featured at existing job fairs. Montgomery County is home to many seniors with substantial skills and talents derived from their positions in government, industry, and academia. The representative encouraged the Commission to support the work of the Department. A highly qualified potential workforce is frequently an important factor in luring high-tech businesses to relocate in Montgomery County.

## **SENIOR PROGRAMMING/SENIOR CENTERS**

The 2008 Summer Study Group on Senior Programming/Senior Centers heard presentations by: Dianne Smith, who oversees senior neighborhood programs; Patricia Streeter, who has been manager of the therapeutic recreation and senior team and who will be the manager of the new therapeutic recreation team when the therapeutic recreation and senior team is split into two distinct teams; Jeffrey Bourne, who is the Chief of the Division of Management Services Administration; and Gabriel Albornoz, Director of the Department of Recreation.

The Summer Study Work Group made site visits to the Longwood Community Center in Brookeville and to the Glenwood Senior Center in Glenwood (Howard County). The Group was extremely impressed with the Glenwood Center, especially with the dedicated space for seniors. The Group agreed that if the county is going to build Community Centers that serve all of the population, enough space should be dedicated for seniors to ensure that they are not left out in the summer months when summer camp programs for children are underway.

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### **COMMISSION ON AGING ACTIVITIES**

Issues were prioritized for discussion in topic-specific groups at the Summit; they included:

- Civic and Social Engagement;
- Communication and Outreach;
- Employment;
- Health and Wellness;
- Home and Community Based Services;
- Housing and Zoning;
- Safety; and
- Transportation and Mobility.

Each Summit work group developed recommendations for action. As a follow-up to the Summit, a sub-cabinet group is charged with coordinating and implementing the recommendations.

Finally, the Commission studied a proposal for the Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP) to establish an ongoing, sustainable method for better understanding and addressing health disparities and related health issues at the sub-county level. The Commission wrote to the County Executive expressing its support for this effort. Mr. Leggett's response confirmed that initial steps for implementing CHIP would begin in 2009.

These activities reflect the efforts by the Commission to discharge its mission to act as an important and meaningful partner with all elements of county government and older members of the community for whom we speak. ■

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### **FY08 COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES**

The Committee also met with the Chief Executive Officer, Department of Housing and Community Affairs, and heard an extensive report on issues relating to affordable housing—an ongoing issue that concerns many elements of the county government.

The Oversight Committee has an enduring interest in the administration of the Senior Nutrition Program. At mid-year, the Commission lent its voice in support of DHHS efforts to provide for competition in the award of new contracts for the provision of congregate meals—a fundamental element of the program. As a result of the competitive process instituted by DHHS, a contract was awarded to a new vendor. The Oversight Committee met with the Director of the Senior Nutrition Program, who reported on the contract provisions and the cost and efficiency advantages obtained. The Committee also heard from the Manager, Home Care Services, concerning the current status of the home care program.

One of the Commission's budget initiatives involves support for a Geriatric Mental Health Treatment Team, a concept which originated in the Oversight Committee. In furtherance of our support for that initiative, the Committee received a report from the Program Manager, Senior Mental Health Services, on the current status of mental health treatment programs in Montgomery County. ■

#### **SENIOR SUMMIT WEBSITE**

Visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/seniorsummit](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/seniorsummit)  
for updated information and recommendations from the  
November 2008 Senior Summit



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### FY08 SUMMER STUDY WORK GROUPS

The Group also saw a need for training community center directors and staff on how to effectively communicate with seniors so that they feel welcome in the centers.

Based on its findings, the Summer Study Group recommended that the Commission become involved in the Department's Capital Improvement Program process, the Department's Facilities and Services Master Plan for 2010 to 2030, the design and senior programming

of new county community centers (e.g., Mid-County and White Oak), and senior programming at existing County Community Centers (e.g., the Gwendolyn Coffield Community Center.)

Finally, the Group urged that the county promote a budget initiative for the Department of Recreation for hiring a consultant to gather and analyze demographics for neighborhood and community centers. This would allow the county to project recreational needs across the county and realign recreational programming as indicated. ■

### Senior Nutrition Hotline 240-777-1100



Are you trying to separate myths from facts when reading about good nutrition? Are you confused in the dietary supplement aisle? Montgomery County has a program to help seniors obtain reliable information on diet, food, and nutrition.

The Area Agency on Aging **Senior Nutrition Hotline** is a free service that lets you speak directly with a registered dietitian on **Wednesdays between 9 and 11 a.m.** Learn to eat for a healthy weight, decrease the risk of many chronic diseases, and better navigate the supermarket, health food store or farmers market aisle.



Sign up for email alerts and information on Seniors and Caregivers Issues by visiting

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov)

1. Click on the "Government tab"
2. Select eSubscription sign up
3. Select "Create an Account"
4. Check "Seniors and Caregivers"



## Caring for your aging parent or loved one?

It's not all up to you. Call us.

### Senior Resource Line

240-777-3000 240-777-4575 (TTY)



Now taking calls till 7:30pm Tue, Wed, Thur

Regular hours M-F 8:30 – 5:00

A service of your County Government

# Montgomery County Commission on Aging Annual Report 2008

			<b>Montgomery Senior Site</b> Caregivers Consumer Issues Employment Health Recreation & Libraries Safety Senior Housing Taxes & Finance Transportation
			
			

Looking for services for Seniors  
Please visit the new Montgomery Senior Site designed to  
provide information on county services  
in one easy-to-find place.  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/seniors](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/seniors)



Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive

## Department of Health and Human Services

Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director

Dr. John J. Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Services

Dr. Odile Saddi, Acting Director, Area Agency on Aging

## Contact Information

Department of Health and Human Services

Aging and Disability Services

Commission on Aging

401 Hungerford Drive, 4th Floor

Rockville, Maryland 20850

240-777-1120 (Voice) 240-777-1236 (TTY) 240-777-1436 (FAX)

March 2009